

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 04714 272201Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15 SSM-05
IO-14 ACDA-10 H-02 L-03 TRSE-00 MCT-01 /083 W
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P R 260934Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4100
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4714

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT - PARA 4 LINE 7 AND 8)

USIA FOR INA, IOP/M

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SY, IS, US

SUBJECT: DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT ASSAD

1. DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT AL-ASSAD WAS
THE LEAD STORY IN ALL SYRIAN PAPERS JULY 25. AL-BAATH HEAD-
LINED FOLLOWING ASSAD REMARKS: "BEGIN'S PROPOSAL IS UTTERLY
REJECTED: THE ISSUES OF THE GOLAN AND THE SINAI COME AFTER
THE BASIC PALESTINIAN ISSUE; ISRAEL MUST RECOGNIZE THE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIANS WITHOUT RESERVATION; THE ARABS WILL NOT
REMAIN SILENT FOR LONG AND WILL ADVANCE THEIR STRUGGLE FOR
THEIR RIGHTS BY VARIOUS MEANS." TISHRIN HEADLINED FOLLOWING:
"WE BELIEVE ISRAEL DOES NOT WANT PEACE: WHEN ISRAEL RECOGNIZES
THAT THE US WILL ADOPT A NEUTRAL STAND ISRAEL WILL NOT
CONSIDER CONTINUING OCCUPATION OF THE LAND AND USURPATION
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OF RIGHTS. IF WE WERE OFFERED WITHDRAWAL FROM THE GOLAN
IN RETURN FOR A SEPARATE AGREEMENT WE WOULD NOT DO SO.
WE CANNOT ABANDON THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN ARAB
PEOPLE FOR ANYTHING."

2. THE FULL TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW WAS PUBLISHED IN ALL
PAPERS. WE NOTE ONE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE

ENGLISH TEXT AS PROVIDED BY DE BROCHGRAVE (AMMAN 4099) AND THE ARABIC TEXT. QUESTION NUMBER 17, THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY IN THE ENGLISH TEXT READS "IT'S MY VIEW THAT A PALESTINIAN STATE WILL BE LIKE THE REST OF THE ARAB STATES. GIVE THE PALESTINIANS THEIR RIGHTS AND I GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL REACT RESPONSIBLY." A DIRECT TRANSLATION OF THE ARABIC TEXT READS: "IT IS MY OPINION THAT THE PALESTINIAN STATE WILL BE LIKE THE REST OF THE ARAB STATES. IN ANY CASE GIVE THE PALESTINIANS THEIR RIGHTS AND THEY WILL BEAR THEIR RESPONSIBILITY." THE PRESIDENCY TELLS US THAT THE ARABIC TEXT IS THE CORRECT AND OFFICIAL VERSION OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS.

3. UNDER THE HEADING "PRESIDENT ASSAD PUTS THINGS BACK IN ORDER," TISHRIN COLUMNIST JIBRAN KOURIYYE COMMENTING JULY 25 ON ASSAD'S NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW, WRITES: "PREISDENT ASSAD'S STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS AT THIS TIME, WHICH FOLLOWS THE END OF CONTACTS REQUESTED BY THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT WITH THE VARIOUS PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT, HAVE A MAJOR IMPORTANCE SINCE THEY PLACE BEFORE THE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION ONCE AGAIN THE ESSENCE OF THE MIDEAST CRISIS AND THE WAY TO A SOLUTION AND THEY MAKE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR TO IT THAT SYRIA, WITH ITS DEFINITE AND SINCERE KEENNESS FOR RELENTLESS WORK FOR JUST AND LASTING PEACE, CAN NEVER VEER FROM ITS PRINCIPLED STANDS AND FROM ITS ADHERENCE TO THE ARAB TERRITORY AND TO THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PALESTINIAN ARAB PEOPLE."

4. ON JULY 24 AL-BAATH COLUMNIST WALID AL-HAMAN WROTE: "THE ISRAELI PLAN, WITHOUT EVEN DISCUSSING ITS DETAILS, IS CONTRARY TO UN AND UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS. BY FOCUSING ON THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IN THE EVENT OF ARAB INSISTENCE--WHICH IS FIRM--ON PLO PARTICIPATION IN IT, AND ITS ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL TO HOLD BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS OR TO FORM THREE ARAB-AMERICAN-ISRAELI COMMITTEES, ISRAEL SEEKS TO TORPEDO THE FRAMEWORK UPON WHICH THE WHOLE WORLD IS UNANIMOUS REGARDING SETTLEMENT OF THE ISSUE. (THE PLAN) IS REJECTED BY THE ARAB NATION. WE ARE AWAITING THE AMERICAN POSITION TO BE CARRIED BY SECRETARY VANCE TO ARAB CAPITALS ON AUGUST FIRST. THE ARAB POSITION AND ARAB OPTIONS WILL THEN BE DETERMINED. MURPHY

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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